

HALL OF RECORDS

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Eighteenth Annual Report

MARYLAND STATE BOARD

OF

MOTION PICTURE CENSORS



1933-1934

OFFICES

211 NORTH CALVERT STREET

BALTIMORE - MARYLAND

Eighteenth Annual Report

MARYLAND STATE BOARD

of

MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

1933-1934

BERNARD B. GOUGH
Chairman

ASA C. SHARP
Vice-Chairman and Treasurer

MARIE WHITE PRESSTMAN
Secretary

HELEN L. ODOM
Chief Clerk

OFFICES

211 NORTH CALVERT STREET
BALTIMORE - MARYLAND

BALTIMORE, December 31, 1934

HON. ALBERT C. RITCHIE,
Governor of Maryland,
Annapolis, Maryland.

DEAR GOVERNOR RITCHIE:

We are submitting to you herewith a report of the business and proceedings of the State Board of Motion Picture Censors during the period beginning October 1, 1933, and ending September 30, 1934.

An itemized statement of the findings of the Board on all films examined, and a statement of receipts and disbursements, are attached to this report.

OPERATIONS OF THE BOARD

The Board has examined a total of 2,261 original films during the past year as compared with 2,325 original films censored the previous year. The loss in the number of original films is offset by a marked increase in duplicate prints submitted during the past year, which numbered 7,823, as compared with 7,046 duplicates for the year before. Of the films examined, 9,296 prints were approved, as compared with 8,685 films the previous year. Nine films were rejected in toto, of which number four were later passed in reconstructed form. The Board has found cause to order eliminations made in 779 films as compared with 676 as reported for 1932-1933.

By reason of the cuts in all salaries and other cuts in the original budget, the Board has been able to operate at a total expense for the year of \$27,174.49, as compared with \$34,186.59 the year before. The total receipts of the Board from censorship fees and from the sale of substitute seals amounted to \$36,563.00. This is a gain of \$2,687.54 over the receipts for the previous year. The fees collected and remitted to the State Treasurer amounted to \$9,389.51 in excess of the total operating expenses of the Board.

APPEALS

The members of the Board have screened 5,642,839 feet of original films in the projection room of the Board, at 211 North Calvert Street. In addition to this, 30,831,482 feet of duplicate films have been checked and examined in the office. The Board has acted upon fifty-eight appeals from its rulings on original censoring. In only one case during the past year has the Board been overruled in its findings by the Court. A total of four appeal cases reached the Baltimore City Court during the period of this report.

STANDARDS OF FILM PRODUCTION

A very great improvement in the moral tone of films submitted has been apparent, especially during the last quarter of the year. The campaign for better films conducted by the churches and organizations throughout the country has had its effect at the source of production. Another factor in the clean-up of the screen is the reconstruction of films for censorship territories, which include the States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Kansas and Maryland. In the great majority of cases the Board finds that an objectionable film has already been deleted and reconstructed before being submitted to this Board.

There are, however, producers who deliberately defy all efforts to improve the moral quality of their productions. Some of the undesirable films are made outside of this country, while others are the product of the so-called Independents. The industry, as a whole, is responding to the pressure brought to bear upon it to clean house. The exhibitors, especially in the neighborhood houses, are cooperating in the effort to suppress unfit lobby displays, and are endeavoring to obtain cleaner films, more suitable for family audiences.

CHILDREN'S FILMS

This Board has repeatedly called attention in its reports to the importance of restricting the attendance of children unaccompanied by their parents at many of the films. Scientific surveys recently made have demonstrated that the health and mental attitudes of children are being seriously affected by the type of motion pictures exhibited in this country.

The Board advocates a change in the law whereby the censors may designate films suitable for adults only. Children under sixteen and unaccompanied by their parents, or by an adult, should be prevented by law from attending such shows. This plan has been followed in Great Britain. The Censor Board under the Police Department of the City of Chicago designates films for adult attendance.

PROSECUTIONS

The Board instituted one case against an exhibitor for the exhibition of an uncensored film. The case was dismissed by the magistrate.

CONCLUSION

The Board is greatly indebted to the Attorney General, Mr. William Preston Lane, Jr., and his staff for the able assistance rendered during the year in representing this Board before the Courts.

The members of the Board desire to express to you our very deep appreciation of your constant cooperation and consideration in all matters relating to the conduct of this office.

Respectfully submitted,

BERNARD B. GOUGH,
ASA C. SHARP,
MARIE W. PRESSTMAN.

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS
For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 1934

RECEIPTS

FEES:

Original Reels (5,642,839 feet)-----	\$12,618.00
Duplicate Reels (20,831,462 feet)-----	23,094.00
Sale of Substitute Seals (851) at \$1.00-----	851.00
	<u>\$36,563.00</u>

TOTAL RECEIPTS:

Remitted to State Treasury-----	<u>\$36,563.00</u>
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EXPENSES

Salaries and Wages-----	\$21,941.78
Office Supplies and Stationery-----	281.98
Printing-----	140.75
Film Approval Seals-----	1,221.91
Motion Picture Machine Supplies-----	43.34
Office Repairs and Replacements-----	24.01
Light, Heat, Power and Water-----	209.38
Traveling-----	603.38
Communication-----	299.90
Insurance-----	60.00
Motion Picture Equipment-----	68.06
Rent-----	2,280.00
	<u>\$27,174.49</u>

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 1934

BUDGET ACCOUNT (PER COMPTROLLER)

Appropriation, 1934.....	\$27,339.00	
Appropriated Receipts.....	603.52	
Refunds to Credit of Budget.....	21.70	
	<hr/>	\$27,964.22
Less—Disbursements by the State Treasury for Expenses.....		27,174.49
Unexpended Balance, September 30, 1934, re- verted to State Treasury.....		<u>\$789.73</u>

WORKING FUND

Total Working Fund on Deposit, Union Trust Company, September 30, 1934---	<u>\$400.00</u>
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MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS
REPORT OF FILMS EXAMINED

October 1, 1933—September 30, 1934

	Films Original	Films Duplicate	Reels Original	Reels Duplicate	No. of Feet Original	No. of Feet Duplicate	Films Approved	Films Rejected	Films Eliminated
October....	186	597	592	1,914	496,276	1,630,486	724	3	56
November...	193	620	579	2,099	480,483	1,809,938	723	2	88
December...	197	686	579	1,763	486,314	1,962,218	805	1	77
January....	208	695	660	2,230	565,323	1,879,682	816	0	87
February...	197	636	525	1,863	460,357	1,648,975	760	0	73
March.....	202	706	588	2,325	496,993	1,973,269	827	0	81
April.....	179	663	516	1,918	440,312	1,757,438	759	1	82
May.....	194	700	622	2,188	507,695	1,884,571	831	2	61
June.....	172	631	461	1,465	404,402	1,506,171	763	0	40
July.....	164	595	472	1,602	404,802	1,430,791	702	0	57
August....	190	637	236	1,908	470,131	1,666,100	786	0	41
September..	179	657	507	1,968	429,751	1,681,823	800	0	36
	2,261	7,823	6,337	23,243	5,642,839	20,831,462	9,296	*9	779

* Four later passed in reconstructed form.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Films, Original.....	2,261			
Films, Duplicate.....	7,823			
Reels, Original.....		6,337		
Reels, Duplicate.....		23,243		
Number of Feet, Original.....			5,642,839	
Number of Feet, Duplicate.....			20,831,462	
Films Approved.....				9,296
Films Rejected.....				9
Films Eliminated.....				779
	10,084	29,580	26,474,301	10,084

CLASSIFICATION OF FILMS
October 1, 1933—September 30, 1934

	Dramas	Comedies	News	Cartoons	Advertising	Miscellaneous
October.....	219	217	274	33	5	35
November.....	232	216	267	26	7	65
December.....	251	232	305	45	3	47
January.....	251	233	288	55	6	70
February.....	216	222	261	73	1	60
March.....	263	260	270	31	25	59
April.....	224	218	289	69	3	39
May.....	245	268	275	52	9	45
June.....	194	161	313	31	6	78
July.....	188	193	289	38	3	48
August.....	220	179	297	72	12	47
September.....	210	191	327	56	5	47
	2,713	2,590	3,455	601	85	640

ELIMINATIONS
October 1, 1933—September 30, 1934

	Dramas Eliminated	Comedies Eliminated	News Reels Eliminated	Miscellaneous Eliminated
October.....	56	0	0	0
November.....	84	4	0	0
December.....	71	5	1	0
January.....	80	0	5	2
February.....	68	4	0	1
March.....	72	6	0	3
April.....	74	6	0	2
May.....	57	4	0	0
June.....	34	6	0	0
July.....	50	4	0	3
August.....	36	5	0	0
September.....	36	0	0	0
	718	44	6	11